



# NEWS RELEASE

## PRESS OFFICE

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## **SBA Names 2009 Florida Small Business Person of the Year**

*Jacksonville Woman-owned Business Competed with Business Owners in 43 Counties*

Jacksonville, Fla., -- The U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) North Florida District Office is pleased to announce the 2009 Small Business Person of the Year for the State of Florida: Mary Tappouni, President of Breaking Ground Contracting Company.

"Mary Tappouni, President of Breaking Ground Contracting Company has been named the 2009 Small Business Person of the Year for the SBA in the State of Florida. In its 11<sup>th</sup> year, the company has grown from one to nine full time employees and increased revenues more than 3 fold since 2004 - averaging 56% growth each year," says Wilfredo J. Gonzalez, SBA District Director. "We are proud of Ms. Tappouni's accomplishments and of her commitment to small business and environmentally friendly practices. She is an example of the credence of the importance of small businesses to our American economy. Especially during these tough economic times," states Gonzalez.

Mary Tappouni has not only excelled at being a female entrepreneur in the male dominated construction field, she has successfully blended her profession with her passion for the environment and along the way established a new standard for "green" commercial construction. Mary's creative vision for Breaking Ground Contracting has produced an organization recognized for excellence in design, building, construction management and pre-construction consultation.

The 2009 Small Business Person of the Year, Champion Small Business Owners and top SBA lenders will be recognized at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Small Business Week & Lender Awards Celebration on April 30, 2009 in Jacksonville at the University of North Florida's University Center from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. The Keynote Speaker is Tom Szaky, Cofounder and CEO of Terra-Cylce, the world's first products made from, and packaged in, waste. This event is hosted by the UNF Small Business Development Center. For more information on this award ceremony, please visit [www.sbdc.unf.edu](http://www.sbdc.unf.edu). Small Business Week events will occur across the North Florida District. For award criteria or other program information, please call Lola Kress Naylor, (904) 443-1933, or e-mail [lola.naylor@sba.gov](mailto:lola.naylor@sba.gov). **Visit the agency Website at [www.sba.gov/fl/north](http://www.sba.gov/fl/north).**

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